

# Hillside Community Church Moves Forward With Addition Plans

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE

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"We are not building to get bigger. We are building to be able to better serve the community."

With these words, pastor Steve Walters of Vermillion's Hillside Community Church announced an estimated \$175,000 addition to the church located on the western edge of Vermillion.

"Our goal is to have something going on in the church as many times per week as possible," he said. "If you look at our calendar, we have events going on 3-4 days per week - a variety of different things. We ask, 'If Hillside disappeared would anyone miss us?' Our goal is to be a place where, if we went away, people would miss us."

The addition, which will complete the octagon shape of the existing facility, will be used to house a new nursery, and office planned for a second full time pastor. In addition, it will add an additional 50 seats in the sanctuary, a large conference room for meeting and classroom space and will expand the existing youth and preschool area.

"We are calling this a very pragmatic addition," Walters said. "Our goal is to borrow the funds for the addition, but to have the loan paid off within three years."

He noted that up to this point the planning has been mostly strategic.

"We had a committee meeting (Monday) night, where we kind of finalized our initial plans," Walters said. "Now, the real work can begin. I have kind of called it similar to riding a roller coaster. Where you are just going up the big hill hearing that click, click, click, and you know when you get to the top you are going to really start going, well we are at the top of the hill."

The church, which was built in 1979, has seen steady growth and mostly full Sunday services; however, the intention



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

**Hillside Community Church will be going forward with an addition this summer with an estimated cost of \$175,000. The addition, will include classrooms, meeting space, additional room in the sanctuary as well as an office for a second full-time pastor.**

of the addition is not to add more members, per se, it is to grow the church's outreach within the community allowing them to serve more.

"We decided this would be the most effective way to minister to other needs in the community," Walters said.

He noted that the philosophy of the church is that it is more effective to plant a new church than to build a huge addition, which is why the congregation chose to be modest with its plans.

"We have been in communication with the congregation all through the process," he noted. "We considered doing an expansion on the east side of the church, but the cost would have been significantly higher, and we decided this addition plan was the right path to take."

The addition plans were approved

by 88 percent of the congregation, with those who were opposed, seeking more information, not against the addition, Walters said.

"The building committed hopes to have final concepts in place by June 1," he noted. "Then by fall we hope to have a contractor in place and the exterior walls up."

He noted that the approval of the congregation was for a project that cost no more than \$200,000, but with initial estimates in the \$150,000 range, he feels that their goal will be easily met.

"This is just a good investment, so in the future we can plant more churches," Walters said. "Our goal is to make disciples of Jesus Christ so we can better sever the communities of the world."



## A Look Back At St. Agnes' School Year

BY SARAH WETZEL

For the Plain Talk

With the elementary schools in town finishing next week, it's a good time for reflection on the past school year, and looking forward to a bright school year ahead.

Five St. Agnes students sat down with us to share their favorite moments from the current school year and to share some future hopes and plans.

**Q: What was your favorite thing that you did this school year?**

Debbie, 9, grade three- When we did this presentation where we did this gospel virtue. We would say all kinds of stuff what we should do and at the end of it we did this song and we got to dance to it. Our virtue was either kindness or forgiveness.

Luke, 10, grade four- Probably when I played Jesus at the Passion play. It was hard at first but I had fun doing it in the end. It was hard memorizing 18 lines but I really enjoyed it. I got to play a big part and it made me really happy that I had that part. I put a lot of work into it and just felt really good about it. It definitely helped me with my reading skills and now I'm not really afraid to do plays anymore. I used to be a little shy about it but now I'm fine.

Ava, 10, grade five- Some of it is having a new teacher and being with the same class I've had from a long time ago. Some of it is seeing the new addition to the school. That's fun to watch. They're still working on it but it looks really nice.

Lydia, 6, grade one- I liked doing art on Fridays. In one of them around Christmas we got to make an Elf. We got to use green and red paper and we got a shirt for the elf, pants, shoes and the hat. And then once we did an Easter Bunny for Easter. It had big ears and was white and pink.

Max, 8, grade two- My favorite part this year was probably Catholic Schools Week. We get to do fun stuff like one day is pajama day and we get to read in the gym for that. Another day would be spirit day. Another day we would go dance in the gym. For Spirit day we wore a choice of any red shirt and your choice of



SARAH WETZEL / FOR THE PLAIN TALK

**From shows to studies, students at St. Agnes Elementary School have a lot of pleasant memories to look back on and many new adventures to look forward to.**

pants. Red white and blue are the colors of the school.

**Q: What was something you enjoyed learning about?**

Debbie- Probably math when we were doing area. We got to do the area of the classroom and it was fun. When we did it in the classroom we got a meter stick and we would go across and flip it over and count how many times each way and times it and that's the area of the room or the thing you have. It's important so you don't miss an inch or something like that.

Luke- Most people think of this as gross but the favorite thing that we did was dissect an owl pellet. It was fun. Most kids thought it was gross but I liked it. We found bones. Some people found part of a skull. I found teeth and stuff like bones and hair. Mainly we learned that owls can't digest the bones and they need to get it out of their system.

Ava- Probably the fun book talks that we do. Those are really fun. Last year we just wrote them on paper but this year we got to do cereal boxes and write them. A book talk is you read a book and then she gives you the activity and you have to write the summary of the book and how many stars

you rate it like five and you tell why you enjoyed the book and you try to make the people interested that you're reading it to. I did 'Everyday Angel' the second book. I rated it five stars. It was really good.

Lydia- I liked learning big words. We did learn about vocabulary words. We did some when we learned about time. The shortest hand is the hour hand. The longer hand is the minute hand.

second grade- I'm excited to do more AR tests. It's when you read a book and then take a test on a book. I've been reading lots of Junie B's

Max- I really liked learning about the water cycle. If there's water in a river or lake it evaporates which means it turns into water vapor and goes up into the air and condenses and makes clouds. When clouds get too full it precipitates as hail, snow, rain or sleet and then it goes back in the river and starts again.

**Q: What are you excited for next year?**

Debbie- I'm excited to learn all the math stuff we're going to do. And I heard you can go

to recess or do something else like read.

Luke- I'm excited about the new addition. So far we're in the trailer outside. We're going to be in the addition and there are some other rooms in there too. The only problem is I only have one year in the addition.

Ava- I'll be in the middle school next year. I'm excited about getting new friends because I had a tough time with friends so I'm hoping to make new friends and get new teachers and get the feeling of being in a bigger school with older kids. I'm nervous because it's a change because this is a little smaller and our classes are really small. Next year I think they'll be really big. And going around and not being late for classes and stuff like that.

Max- For next year I'm excited for learning cursive.

**Q: Do you have any fun summer plans?**

Debbie- One of my mom's relatives might come over from the Philippines and visit us for a little while and we might go to Rapid City. We might just look at the sights or spend the day relaxing.

Luke- I'm going to Yellowstone with my family. I'm really excited to go. I'm also going to see the Pope next year for my birthday. He's coming to Philadelphia. There will be a lot of things going on like little activities. It's a whole family thing.

Ava- I have dance twice a week. I enjoy it, it's just a lot because it's in Sioux City so we have to drive. It's a competition team and then we take classes like stretching and technique and I'm doing lyrical. Stuff like that. Some are one hour long and some are three. I've done it since I was three years old.

Lydia- I'm going to do softball and swimming lessons. I've done swimming lessons a few times.

Max- Me and my family are going on a trip to Glacier National Park in Montana. It's going to be a week or two. We're also going to go swim in the river. We're going to swim on sand bars.



## Students (And Their Teachers) Earn A Summer Break

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE

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On Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon, if you listen very closely, you will hear a loud cheer. Whether it will be louder from the students or the teachers will be the question, as Vermillion Schools finish up the 2015-2016 school year.

According to Vermillion School District (VSD) superintendent Dr. Mark Froke, classes at the High School will finish on Tuesday, May 19, while classes at Vermillion Middle School, Austin Elementary and Jolley Elementary will conclude for the school year on Wednesday, May 20.

"There will be no school for the High School on Wednesday in order to give the teachers a chance to clear out for the renovation," Froke said. "Austin and Jolley will dismiss at 1:50 p.m. on Wednesday and the Middle School will dismiss at 2 p.m."

Froke added that the high school students will finalize their semester tests on Monday and Tuesday.

"Following dismissal on the 20th we will have our staff awards ceremony held in the High School Commons area where we will recognize all the staff who are retiring from the district," Froke said. "We will also honor our outstanding building personnel, and the staff that have been with the district for an extended length of time."

He noted that for those students who are anxious for classes to resume, the first day back for the 2015-2016 school year will be August 19.

"It will come fast," Froke said. "Registration will be held August 10-11. Teachers will have training days on August 17-18, and then the students come back on the 19th."

Before that happens though, one final major event for the school year will be held this weekend.

The Vermillion High School Commencement ceremonies honoring the class of 2015 will be held this Saturday at the Dakota Dome on USD's campus.

"Ceremonies will start at 2:30 p.m., with Dr. Christina Keller, the assistant dean for administration at the University of South Dakota School of Arts and Sciences will be our featured speaker," Froke said. "She will be joined speaking by several of the graduating class including Jack Brown, Jacob Krier, Savannah Kirsch, Regan Bye and Jessica Brady. Board president Chris Esping will distribute the diplomas to the graduates."

Froke noted that the school district is thankful to USD for letting them use the Dakota Dome for the ceremonies.

He added that this has been an outstanding school year and he is honored to have been a part of it.

"We have had an excellent year highlighted by many honors," Froke said. "The students excelled in countless ways."

## Local Students Earn Degrees From UNL

LINCOLN, Neb. - Nearly 3,000 degrees were awarded during commencement exercises May 8 and 9 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Patricia Crews, Willa Cather Professor of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design and founding director of the International Quilt Student Center and Museum, gave the address at the May 8 graduate degree ceremony at Pinnacle Bank Arena, 400 Pinnacle Arena Drive; Barbara Hendricks, opera singer and UNL alumna, delivered the address at the undergraduate ceremony May 9 at Pinnacle Bank Arena; and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., author and environmental attorney, addressed law graduates May 9 in a ceremony at the Lied Center for Performing Arts, 301 N. 12th St.

Area Graduates were:  
Anthony Charles Thomas, College of Fine and Performing Arts, bachelor of arts  
Ellen Myrle Brown, College of Arts and Sciences, bachelor of science

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The Vermillion Police Department will be increasing activities May 18<sup>th</sup> - May 31<sup>st</sup>



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